

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

INTRODUCTION OF THE PRIVATE CONTRACTING CLARIFICATION ACT OF 1998

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the Medicare Private Contracting Clarification Act of 1998. This legislation clarifies a provision of the Balanced Budget Act which, for the first time, allows doctors to privately contract with Medicare beneficiaries for services normally covered by Medicare. My bill will make clear that nothing in this provision prevents Medicare beneficiaries from privately paying for services not covered by Medicare. This has always been true for our seniors, and it remains true under current law.

Prior to passage of the Balanced Budget Act (BBA), federal law did not address the issue of private contracting between Medicare beneficiaries and their doctors. The Kyl amendment to BBA explicitly allows doctors to reject Medicare and privately contract with their patients for Medicare-covered services. For patients entering into private contracts, this means that they will be unable to use either their Medicare or Medigap coverage for their care.

However, BBA includes assurances that private contracting will not destroy the balance billing limits and other patient protections of the Medicare program. Most importantly, BBA bars physicians who choose to privately contract from the Medicare program for two years. This means that patients will know in advance whether or not their Part B insurance is valid for a doctor's care. It means that Medicare patients can expect consistent and timely care from a physician, regardless of the patient's ability to pay out-of-pocket for a Medicare benefit under a private contract. In sum, seniors can rest assured that their Medicare coverage will be there for them when they need it.

Unfortunately, false claims are being made about BBA's private contracting provisions. Proponents of private contracting are seeking to remove the two year exclusion period in BBA. In an effort to vastly expand doctors' ability to engage in private contracting, they claim that doctors will need private contracts for all services, even those not covered by Medicare. This is simply not true. Nothing in the Balanced Budget Act affects the ability of seniors to privately pay doctors for services that Medicare does not cover.

Despite this fact, some groups continue to wage misinformation campaigns. My bill will put an end to this false rhetoric by clarifying that no private contract is required for a service that Medicare does not cover. It will eliminate the confusion surrounding this much-debated issue, to assure seniors that their contract with Medicare, a public contract, will continue to be honored.

Mr. Speaker, we have scarcely had time to understand the impact of the existing private

contracting provisions on the Medicare program. The Congressional Budget Office has already stated that private contracting holds a "serious potential for overbilling." Congress recently created a commission to examine ways to ensure the long-term financial stability of Medicare. To vastly expand the scope of this provision on the basis of inaccurate claims about its effect on doctors is a grave mistake, especially during this crucial period in the history of the program.

If we must pass legislation on the private contracting issue, let us focus our attention on clarifying current law to assure seniors that their Medicare coverage will be there for them when they need it. BBA allows doctors to privately contract with Medicare beneficiaries, while preserving the balance billing limits, fraud and abuse controls, and patient protections of the Medicare program. I would hope our priority in Congress would be to preserve our commitment to our senior citizens and their health care. Let's keep the Medicare program in tact.

ACCESS TO ENERGY

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, recently, a national newsletter focusing on science, technology and energy policy highlighted the small town of Seadrift, Texas located in my District.

While focusing on Seadrift this newsletter article (Access to Energy) went on to make important points regarding the contributions which science and technology have made to freedom and industry and to the quality of life of people everywhere.

Moreover, the article outlines how certain radicals would shut off technological benefits in the name of protecting earth at the expense of the humans who live on this planet. I commend this article to every Member and insert it in the record as an extension hereof.

[From Access to Energy, February 1998]

SEADRIFT

Near the Gulf of Mexico, on the road between Houston and Corpus Christi, is the town of Victoria, Texas—one of the oldest settlements in the western United States. Thirty-five miles southeast of Victoria, rising out of the mists that roll in from the Gulf near the town of Seadrift, is one of America's great petrochemical plants, built by Union Carbide in 1954 and later expanded several times.

I feel that I know this plant well, since I have a large framed aerial photograph of it on the wall beside me along with a matching framed artist's drawing of the plant before it was built. Under the artist's drawing is the aluminum hard hat of the man who was in charge of the design and construction of this plant and partially responsible for its operation during the first four years—my father, Edward H. "Ted" Robinson. His most trusted and valued co-worker at that time, Arnold

Graham, still lives in Victoria, remembering their efforts.

Ted Robinson went on to lead teams of engineers who designed and built similar Union Carbide plants in Puerto Rico, Scotland, Belgium, Brazil, Japan, and India. He is buried in an alpine glacier near the top of Mont Blanc on the border between France and Italy, which contains the remains of the Air India Boeing 707 that crashed there on January 24, 1966. The cause of this crash is not known for certain. It is believed to have been the work of assassins that killed the Indian physicist Bhaba, who was then head of the nuclear energy program of India and was also on the airplane.

The original plant at Seadrift produced primarily polyethylene. It now produces additional products. This plant is a part of the vast infrastructure of chemical plants, built by the generation of Americans now in their 80s and the generations before them, that supplies the chemicals upon which our technological civilization depends. Along with the dams, bridges, foundries, mines, wells, mills, factories, railroads, research laboratories, computers, and other technological installations that have been built by the past several generations of Americans, these plants form the technological superstructure upon which our science, technology, and economic freedom depend.

The capital required to build these things was supplied by the savings of tens of millions of people, who set aside part of the money they had earned and invested it in the free market in hopes of making a profit. It was also built by the profits retained by the corporations themselves. Capital alone did not, however, build the industries—people did. These people were led by unusual individuals whose love of science and technology dominated their personal lives and drove them and those around them to ever greater accomplishments.

Archibald MacLeish told me many years ago that the thing that impressed him most about human beings was their amazing ability to love—and he was not thinking of the shallow phenomenon that dominates the lyrics in the cacophony of "pusic" (word invented by a musician friend) which pollutes most of America's radio stations.

Each person has an enormous capacity to love—in many different ways. In some individuals, a part of this love is intensely directed toward science and technology. My father, for example, was simply head-over-heels in love with chemical plants (and with my mother, but that is another story). He lived and breathed their design and construction. When not in use for food, our kitchen table was covered with blueprints. He had no hobbies or avocations—the building of chemical plants was his vocation and all of his avocations combined. And, as a result of this all-consuming love, he built superb plants.

I have seen this sort of love in a few other individuals. Mrs. Merrifield, the wife of R. Bruce Merrifield, who was the first man to synthesize an enzyme, described her husband's love affair with each of the 20 naturally occurring amino acids—a love that enabled him to link them together in ways never before accomplished.

Linus Pauling, regardless of the low state of his personal and professional ethics, was completely in love with the structures of molecules. The incredible joy Linus felt as

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

he pursued three-dimensional, semi-quantitative explanations for the structures of molecules and, later, for the structures of atomic nuclei was the greatest of all the scientists I have known. He was supremely happy when calculating or describing the properties of chemical bonds.

Scientists work largely alone or with a few other people. Those who build industries work with large numbers of people. These prime builders, driven by their love for their work, are usually not the most well-liked, but they are often the most respected. It is their job to make our industrial world work—regardless of the personal foibles of those whom they must direct in doing this work. Their personal love for their work is the driving force that motivates them.

All of us are beneficiaries of science and technology. We live lives that are much longer and are filled with seemingly endless pleasures, experiences, and freedoms that would not be available without technology. Even the "warmers" who gathered in Kyoto to bemoan and attack the world's hydrocarbon technology dropped in by way of airplanes belching demon carbon dioxide.

Now, virtually all of our technology is under serious attack. From our lumber mills, farms, and ranches to our dams, power plants, and factories, all are under assault. Our enemies belong to a peculiar form of pagan religion. Petr Beckmann called it the "green religion." This is not a new religion. The animal, plant, and earth worship ascendant today (partially at the expense of animals, plants, and the earth, which are, on balance, actually harmed by this mania) is fundamentally the same as that which arose periodically among the ancients, as chronicled, for example, in the Old Testament.

This religion is now preached in our schools, our press, and our political institutions. It is, primarily, a religion of death. Technology, in the view of these zealots, has committed a terrible sin. It has made possible the lives of billions of human beings—human beings whom they believe to be alive at the expense of worshiped plants and animals. (The fact that technology enhances the lives of plants and animals is suppressed by the professional enviro religious agitators.)

It is the moral obligation of every American—each living and benefiting from freedom and technology; each obligated to pass these blessings on to future generations; and each entrusted with a vote in the fate of the great American experiment—to stop this mania.

Seadrift and the tens of thousands of like accomplishments must not be destroyed—at least not without a terrible fight.

SONNY BONO MEMORIAL SALTON SEA RECLAMATION ACT

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, the Salton Sea is a unique resource in the Southern California desert. It was created by accident of man, and over the years it has become an attractive, if unlikely, home and resting area for migratory birds and many species of fish.

Now, nearly one hundred years after the permanent Salton Sea was created, it is a polluted mess, always increasingly salty, often smelly and noxious, and most useful as a sump for agricultural and municipal wastewater, almost none of it treated. The birds and

fish that once thrived here are now threatened every day with death and disease as the tons of salts and toxic contaminants that are constantly dumped into the Salton Sea become more and more concentrated and deadly over time. Economic development of the area has been frustrated because of conditions in and around the Salton Sea.

Congressman Sonny Bono worked very hard to bring national attention to the plight of the Salton Sea, and he will always and rightly be remembered for that effort. I agree that Congress should act quickly at the Salton Sea. We need to stabilize salinity and contaminant levels to protect the dwindling fishery resources and to reduce the threats to migratory birds, and we need to devise long-term solutions as well.

I do not, however, believe that Congress should act in haste to authorize and construct an expensive project at the Salton Sea before we know what we are doing. The legislation introduced today is well-intentioned, but I believe it could force Congress to make decisions and spend taxpayer dollars before the scientists and engineers have supplied us with the information we need to make good decisions. I am particularly concerned that we preserve the integrity of the National Environment Policy Act, and that we do not hastily commit to "solutions" at the Salton Sea that may limit our options for addressing other water and resource management problems in Southern California and elsewhere in the Lower Colorado River Basin. The problems at the Salton Sea are closely tied to many controversial water quality and water management issues in southern California and elsewhere in the Lower Colorado River Basin, and our solutions for the Salton Sea should properly be made in that broader context.

I sincerely appreciate the efforts that have been made by the Congressional Salton Sea Task Force and by the Salton Sea Authority, and I look forward to consideration of this bill in the Resources Committee.

ON ELECTRIC DEREGULATION

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues working on and thinking about electric deregulation ("retail wheeling") the remarks of Anthony J. Alexander, Executive Vice-President & General Counsel of Ohio Edison Company, which he delivered to members of Local 245, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). There is much to be learned from the candid revelations of this leader in the electric power industry.

Contrary to what you've heard from supporters of retail wheeling, this issue isn't about rate cuts—because there's no guarantee on rates. In fact, they could go up for many Ohioans. And, in any event, from a global competitiveness standpoint, we already have electric rates that are lower than those of most industrialized countries in the world.

It's not about efficiency—we already have the most efficient and reliable system in the world. In fact, many of our energy-efficiency programs, especially for low income customers, could be lost under the new system.

And it's not about fairness—because only a few, privileged customers and suppliers may profit from retail wheeling. And, it's likely to lead to many differences in prices, which today we'd call discrimination.

Let's not be naive: This issue is all about money—and lots of it. There's a lot of money on the table—not only for those who believe that retail wheeling will allow them to negotiate more favored prices, but also for the speculators in futures, options, hedges and derivatives. Wall Street and others are driving this issue not for the sake of free markets, but to gain access to profits.

After all, this change involves one of the nation's largest, and most capital-intensive, industries as well as thousands of people, just like members of Local 245, who work hard every day to deliver high-quality service to customers.

Make no mistake about this point: For supporters of retail wheeling, it's all about them getting more . . . and quite frankly, us getting less. And when I say us, I don't just mean utility employees. I'm also talking about senior citizens, small business owners, customers on low incomes, working families—including those headed by single parents . . . in other words, the vast majority of people who probably won't have suppliers competing for their business.

Other key issues are reliability and convenience. Under the existing system, utilities are obligated to serve all customers—the unprofitable as well as the profitable. By effectively eliminating the basic obligation, the reserve margins generated by today's power plants—as well as the thousands of utility jobs associated with those margins—simply wouldn't exist. Why? Because under retail wheeling, generation that is held in reserve to assure reliability would no longer be mandated. No one would build expensive new power plants or maintain reserves or any other inventories simply to assure reliable and adequate supply.

Rather than a service, electricity would become a market-drive commodity in which price and profit are the only concerns.

Reliability is a serious issue in any deregulated industry. But considering the essential role electricity plays in every home and business, unreliable electric service is a much bigger problem than a busy signal or a canceled flight.

This is a complicated issue, because the electric business is far different from other industries that have been deregulated. At the same time, supporters of retail wheeling are trying to mask the real impact of transforming electric service into just another product for which there's no substitute—and, no other product or service just like it.

Remember, choice goes both ways—customers can choose their suppliers, and suppliers can choose their customers. If lawmakers decide that our industry must be deregulated, then they should take the time to do it right the first time—because the stakes are too high to do otherwise.

THE ECONOMY

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, February 25, 1998 into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

STATE OF THE ECONOMY

Last year the nation's economy gave its best performance in a generation. The economy grew strongly and created jobs while inflation declined. The gross domestic product

grew 3.8%. Employment rose by 3.2 million. The unemployment rate dropped below 5% for the first time in 24 years and inflation averaged only 1.7%, its lowest rate in decades.

This remarkable economic performance occurred while the federal budget deficit, which reached \$290 billion in 1992, declined to only \$22 billion in 1997. The deficit is expected to approach zero this fiscal year. By most measures the economy is exceptionally healthy. In the past, such strong growth, coming at a time when the nation's unemployment rate was falling below 5%, would have caused inflation to worsen, but in 1997 the opposite occurred.

The prospects for continued growth with low unemployment and low inflation remain very good for this year. Economists find the U.S. economy free of many of the symptoms that often presage an economic downturn, such as an increase in inflation or a large accumulation of inventories or evidence of financial imbalance.

REASONS FOR SUCCESS

There are many reasons for the strong economy. Deficit reduction has reduced government spending relative to overall growth, and strong U.S. exports have also provided a boost. Most of the credit for the economy's performance has to go to American workers and companies. They have met challenges of a competitive global economy and rapidly changing technology.

The role of the government has not been to stimulate the economy, but rather to try to provide individuals and businesses with the tools they need to flourish through their own efforts. Sound economic policies have promoted private investment, and the government has tried to encourage the formation of skills through training and education and to empower marginalized members of our society to join the work force.

FUTURE CHALLENGES

Of course challenges remain, particularly in the areas of productivity, savings, trade, and income inequality.

PRODUCTIVITY

Productivity, the measure of economic output per worker, is the key to rising living standards. Productivity growth, which has averaged a bit more than 1% in the 1990s, is less than half of the pace of the '50s and '60s. The situation, however, may be improving. The most recent data show productivity growing about 2% for the past two years, twice the rate of the past two decades; manufacturing productivity is even higher. If sustained, that will allow the economy to grow even faster without inflation, with benefits for wages, profits, and unemployment.

SAVINGS

Private savings, which are important to investment that increases productivity, are at historic lows. Americans are currently saving about half of what they need to sustain their current living standards and that could soon become everybody's problem.

TRADE

The U.S. trade deficit for goods and services reached \$114 billion in 1997, the worst showing in nine years. Most attribute the widening deficit to a strong dollar and a healthy U.S. economy, which absorbs more imports. Experts predict that the economic crisis in Asia will increase our trade deficit this year.

Income inequality

Between 1974 and 1994 families in the upper 5% of income distribution enjoyed an average annual gain in income of 1.2% while all others saw their incomes stagnate or shrink. It appears that the lion's share of gains from productivity is going to those with more

education and skills. We must continue to push for high and rising living standards for all our people and ensure that the benefits of a higher standard of living are widely shared.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Most of the experts think that the American economy will continue to expand through 1998 although the pace of growth will be slower than in 1997 due to the Asian financial turmoil and the prospect of tighter labor markets. If the current expansion continues through this year, it will have lasted more than 7 years, the longest period of non-stop economic growth since the 1960s. That record will be surpassed if the current expansion extends into January 2000.

Economists point to a number of factors that could derail the good times. Some worry about higher inflation as job markets continue to tighten. Others fret about the threat of sharply declining prices, particularly if Asian countries try to grow out of their financial difficulties by flooding our markets with cheap imports rather than boosting internal consumption. The danger is that declining prices might trigger lower incomes, leaving many Americans without enough money to pay off their debts. Still other economists play out different scenarios: a consumer debt crisis; a sharp decline in stock prices or a punishing trade deficit; higher unemployment; and shrinking corporate profits, with the attendant cost-cutting and layoffs.

Economists are fond of pointing out that every expansion contains the seeds of its own demise: Investors get too enthusiastic and pay too much for stocks or real estate. Businesses flush with profits and new orders invest too much in new plants or build up too much inventory. Banks take on riskier loans. Over-confident consumers take on too much debt. Prices and interest rates rise, shortages develop. And there is always the possibility of some large unforeseen event, such as the oil shocks of the 1970s, that causes a big change in the price or supply of key commodities. In short, things happen during expansions that make them end, but of course, nobody can predict when.

UNFINISHED AGENDA

Americans can take pride in our economic record of the last decade. We have the strongest, most successful economy in the world, and have become the model for other countries. Nonetheless, I worry about our country's unfinished, and largely undiscussed, agenda. First, I am most concerned about the widening gap between rich and poor. We must do more to increase the skills of our workers and create more good-paying jobs. Second, I worry about the long-term prospects for a balanced budget, particularly in the absence of serious reform to Medicare, Social Security, and other entitlement programs. Without such reform, the deficit will likely explode again when the baby boomers start to retire. Third, I think that we are not investing enough in our nation's children and their future. We need to make sure that every child has a minimum good start, health care, nutrition and educational opportunities.

HONORING DR. EVA EVANS DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. DEBBIE STABENOW

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, each year, during the month of February, our nation

comes together to celebrate the history and culture of the African American community.

During Black History Month, it is my honor to acknowledge an outstanding American, Dr. Eva Evans, and her leadership.

Beginning as a child in the Detroit Public Schools, Dr. Evans has always shown a commitment to education. After receiving her Ph.D. in Administration and Higher Education at Michigan State University, Dr. Evans joined the Lansing public school system, where she worked her way from an elementary school teacher to Lansing's highly respected Deputy Superintendent for Instruction.

Along with her professional commitment to Lansing, Dr. Evans is deeply involved in the community. With a roster of community service activities too long to list, she has served virtually every avenue on both the state and local level, from Chairperson of the Capital Area United Way Board of Directors, to Board of Directors of the Mid-Michigan America Red Cross, to Corporate Board of Directors of the United Negro College Fund.

Currently, Dr. Evans is International President of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, serving our nation's oldest Black Sorority, and continuing a tradition that has initiated more than 180,000 college educated African-American women since its founding in 1908.

Black history month is a special time of year to recognize contribution and achievement, but also to recognize the importance of history. Dr. Evans's work has made a real difference within the many communities of Michigan and literally, around the world. Her achievements have become a part of our history and her service to her state and country is unparalleled.

Though Dr. Evans has already been presented with many awards, such as the Diana Award for Outstanding Leadership in Education, and NAACP's Educator of the Year Award, I am proud to include Dr. Evans' great accomplishments in the 1998 CONGRESSIONAL RECORD during this important month. Dr. Evans is a role model for us all.

A SUCCESS STORY: ROBERT SNIFFEN AND THE SAN DIEGO VETERANS SERVICES CENTER

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, and colleagues, I rise today to recognize the work of Robert Sniffen, Chairman of the Board of the San Diego Veterans Services Center in Escondido, California. Mr. Sniffen was recently awarded the KGTV Channel 10 Leadership Award for his volunteer service which has made a significant impact on the San Diego County community.

In his acceptance remarks, Sniffen said:

I am deeply humbled and greatly honored to receive this significant award. I do so in the name of the scores of volunteers and hundreds of our supporters. I accept this award in the name of the San Diego Veterans Services Center Board of Directors, as well as our Advisory Board Members, that have made the success of the Veterans Service Center a reality. Our whole purpose for existence is to be here in any way possible for this most noble and worthy cause, on behalf

of all veterans of all eras throughout San Diego County.

One way in which the Veterans Service Center is there for veterans is demonstrated in the following statement by Mr. Sniffen. His statement describes the collaboration of the Service Center with the San Diego Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) in order to provide the VFW-SDVS Claims Service for veterans. I would like to submit Mr. Sniffen's statement into the RECORD.

In February 1996 The San Diego Veterans of Foreign Wars Service Office joined forces with the local non profit veterans group, San Diego Veterans Services, to create the VFW/SDVS Claims Service.

Then Department Service Officer Art Rodrigues LLB-J.D. had long believed that VA Claims outreach to veterans in the North part of San Diego County was a concept long over due. Current demographics indicated that some 150,000 of the county's 371,000 veterans resided in the numerous cities north of San Diego. Because of military downsizing, many discharges from Camp Pendleton, the Marine Corps largest base, have now settled in North County.

The experimental partnership forged by Art Rodrigues and Robert Sniffen, Chairman of San Diego Veterans Services, is now a major unprecedented success beyond anyone's wildest expectations! For the immediate past quarter (Oct, Nov, and Dec. 1997), 73 veterans received VA claims awards totaling \$646,979. This quarterly monetary awards total was achieved in only 30 working days. Also during this quarter, 274 vets were counseled and interviewed with another 80 "new" claims filed.

The SDVS, Veterans Service Center of North County, the home of the VFW/SDVS Claims Service, has become a magnet for those wishing to file or refile VA Claims without a major journey to VA Regional facilities.

Now as the word of success of this one-of-a-kind, claims project spreads, some 10-12 veterans a day are interviewed and counseled as to their potential VA claims benefits and rights.

To illuminate the impact of this innovative program, one just needs to look at the following statistics:

The San Diego Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office serves Imperial, Riverside, and San Diego Counties in regards to processing VA claims entitlement applications. This region provides 12,831 disabled veterans with monthly compensation and pension benefit checks.

Of that number, 315 North County vets and their families now receive such entitlements as a direct of the Veterans Service Center of North County's VFW/SDVS Claims. Since February 21, 1996 through November 30, 1997, this singular outreach program has interviewed and counseled 1817 veterans, spouses, widows and survivors to determine potential eligibility for benefit entitlements. These outstanding results were achieved in just 179 working days. As a result of the VFW/SDVS project, 567 vets have filed their VA claims and 315 vets and their families have already been granted back pay and monthly entitlement awards now topping \$3,000,000.00 million dollars.

That \$3 million dollars improved the quality of life for vets families, homeless vets, surviving children of deceased vets, the totally and permanently disabled vets, and those vets with partial disabilities that impact their lifetime earnings capabilities.

Veterans and their families in a dozen or more Northern San Diego County Cities are now enjoying "new found" disposable income that is rightfully due.

When one considers the round trip distance of a 50 mile plus trip to VA facilities from Escondido, it simply makes common sense that certain subsets of our veterans are precluded from taking this "Magical mystery" tour to VA facilities.

This would include an assortment of every disability for a large number of "graying" senior vets suffering from cataracts to hip replacements, as well as younger vets, disabled as a result of their military experience. Others simply are age-affected with fear of such a long trip. Following are a few other factors that prevent many veterans from filing their VA claims at any place else, other than the Vets Center:

Homeless vets without bus fare, and a 2 or 3 hour journey by bus if bus fare is provided.

The on-going distrust of government among some veterans. These Vets find it emotionally harming having to deal with the government. This skepticism is only sometimes justifiable but is real to the veteran.

Veterans who must be convinced they are not "unworthy" of government assistance or large numbers of vets who feel that "their buddies" deserve it and need it more than they do.

Unemployed Veterans and underemployed vets who are busy with 2-3 menial jobs and cannot afford the necessary cost of gas if they have a car.

Widows of deceased veterans who for similar reasons cannot navigate their way to the regional VA office.

Those veterans who come to the center for other "needs". These vets had no intention to file or were unaware of their rights to file for entitlement benefits. All new Center Clients are automatically funneled into "VFW/SDVS Claims Service" office.

Vets who are referred to the VFW/SDVS Claims Service by "Wildfire" word of mouth from fellow vets whose claims were successfully resolved.

Vets who might have filed ages ago, were initially turned down and/or abandoned their claim in the appeal process, out of frustration, moving, or a variety of other reasons.

Trust and belief in the "veterans helping veterans" all volunteer aspect of all Vet Center programs are also vital components of this One-Of-A-Kind-advocacy outreach effort.

If there is another volunteer, local non-profit effort as wildly successful as the VFW/SDVS Claims Service we have yet to hear about it.

We are so very proud of these contributions of "new disposable" income to our vets which has vastly enhanced the quality of life for them and their families. Such efforts benefit our vets, our local businesses, and the community at large.

These glaring, indisputable, "bottom line" numbers touted by the VFW/SDVS Claims Service has been faithfully assembled by the Number Two man responsible for all VFW Claims Offices throughout the State of California, Art Rodrigues, LL.B.J.D., the Deputy Director of the California VFW Service Department. Mr. Rodrigues has single handedly produced each claim award and has kept such numbers during his 22 years of service at the San Diego Mission Valley VA Regional office as the VFW's National Service Officer.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars on the local, state, and national level have recognized the VFW/SDVS Claims Service as a unique and effective project worthy of replication. The VFW recognizes that this effective new method of dispensing claims services, because of cutbacks of VA personnel and budget constraints, will result in less services at VA regional offices. Outreach, one-stop-center efforts will eventually replace central government services across the nation. All

government services, will, in coming decades, emanate from one-stop, outreach community centers. This was made clear by the 1997 VFW National Commander In Chief, James Neirs in his visitation to the Vets Center in early 1997 when he labeled the VFW/SDVS partnerships as a "Model For The Nation."

The VFW/SDVS partnership continues unabated! While Art Rodrigues has retired as a VFW Department Service Officer, he remains on the job in his capacity as the Deputy Director of the California VFW Service Department. As a volunteer three days a week, Art continues to do wonderful work on behalf of the VFW and on behalf of the veterans he serves.

"There is no question that the VFW/SDVS Claims Service is a smashing success. In my twenty two years as a DSO for the VFW I have not seen anything that compares to this efforts record of success. It is my hope that my counterparts in all veterans organization throughout California and the nation will take a close look at our collaborative outreach project and seek the replicate such an effort in their area", stated Rodrigues.

The team of Rodrigues and Sniffen, representing the good works of the VFW and SDVS, are not done yet with their outreach master plan. The 1997 VFW National Convention allocated a one year \$5,000.00 grant to the state VFW which is intended for increased outreach efforts in North San Diego County.

"It has always been our intention to open another VFW/SDVS claims office in Ocean-side, California to handle the ever-increasing numbers of military discharges from Camp Pendleton, many of whom chose to remain in the beautiful North County's cities where they have put down roots" according to Rodrigues and Sniffen.

While awaiting action from the VFW State level, one thing is certain, Veterans in the Northern environs of San Diego County are receiving more VA entitlement awards than ever imagined or would ever have received if not for the existence of this unique and one of the most, if not the most successful, outreach projects in the nation.

Indeed, the VFW/SDVS Claims Service is A Model for the Nation.

INTRODUCING THE PRIVACY PROTECTION ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Privacy Protection Act of 1998, which forbids the use of the Social Security number for any purpose not directly related to the administration of the Social Security system. The Social Security number was created solely for use in administering the Social Security system. However, today the Social Security number is used as an identifier for numerous federal programs. Unless the use of the Social Security number is restricted, it will soon become a national identification number by which the federal government can easily keep track of all vital information regarding American citizens.

Anyone who doubts that we are well on the way to using the Social Security number as an universal identifier need only consult 1996's welfare reform bill, which forces business to report the Social Security number of every new employee to the federal government so it may be recorded in a national data base.

Another example of the abuse of the Social Security number is a provision in tax law requiring a spouse paying alimony furnish the IRS with the Social Security number of the spouse receiving alimony.

There are not isolated incidents; in fact, since the creation of the Social Security number in 1934 there have been almost 40 congressionally-authorized uses of the Social Security number as an identification number for non-Social Security programs! Abuse of the Social Security system also occurs at the state level. Mr. Speaker, in many states. One cannot get a driver's license, apply for a job, or even receive a birth certificate for one's child, without presenting their Social Security number to a government official, and just X weeks ago 210 of my colleagues voted to allow States to require citizens to show their Social Security number in order to vote. Since the Social Security number is part of a federal program created by Congress, it is Congress' responsibility to ensure it is not used to violate the privacy of America's citizens.

Perhaps the most disturbing abuses of the Social Security number is the Congressionally-authorized rule forcing parents to get a Social Security number for their newborn children in order to claim them as a dependent. Mr. Speaker, forcing parents to register their newborn children with the state is more like something out of the nightmare of George Orwell than the dreams of a free Republic that inspired the nation's founders.

Unless the abuses of the Social Security number is stopped, Americans will soon have a de facto national identification number, which would provide the federal government the ability to track all citizens from cradle to grave. The drafters of the Constitution would be horrified if they knew that the federal government would have the ability to set up a universal identifier and every newborn baby had to be assigned a number by the federal government. I therefore urge my colleagues to protect America's freedom by cosponsoring the Privacy Protection Act of 1998.

IN HONOR OF ROCKY RIVER BASKETBALL COURTS

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mike McLaren and the players at the Rocky River courts in Rocky River, Ohio.

Chris Ballard, the author of Hoops Nation, recently toured the country looking for the best basketball courts and pickup games around. I am pleased to announce that Ballard features the Rocky River Courts in Rocky River, Ohio among America's top five basketball courts. NBA greats Danny Ferry and John Amaechi must agree since they play there regularly. The following is Ballard's description of the Rocky River Courts:

Take well-organized yuppie ball out of the health clubs, dump it on a court in a wealthy suburb of Cleveland, and you've got Rocky River, a magnet for Ohio's most talented gym rats. Mike McLaren, a local hoops junkie, has been organizing the games for 20 years, setting up teams and court rotations and keeping the slug fests to a minimum. Until City Hall

runs the players out of town, as it's been threatening to do for years, McLaren's legions will be playing in fair and foul weather.

CONGRESS AND THE INTERNET

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, February 18, 1998 into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

CONGRESS AND THE INTERNET

The Internet is transforming American society. It is having a profound effect on our government institutions and our economy and how we communicate with each other and with the rest of the world. About 40 million people used the Internet in 1996, and that number is expected to rise to about 200 million by 1999.

The Internet is a global network of computers linked by phone and cable lines. It began in 1969 as a Defense Department initiative to link a handful of universities, research laboratories and military bases, and has now become ubiquitous. Individuals can access the Internet from personal computers at home or at work, at schools or in the library. The Internet is a means of disseminating information and, increasingly, a way to conduct business.

Congress is struggling to define what role government should play in the Internet. The Internet is a wide-open forum with few rules and regulations. It is not owned by anyone, and it is not confined by geographical borders. This very openness is the great strength of the Internet, facilitating the free exchange of information and ideas around the world. It is also a source of concern. For example, some of the most profitable web sites on the Internet are devoted to gambling and pornography. Some in Congress have urged aggressive regulation of the Internet, while others have urged minimal government involvement.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

The Internet has had a dramatic effect on how the average citizen interacts with the federal government. First, individuals now have greater access to information about government. Federal agencies have web sites which usually describe key programs and initiatives and help citizens get answers to commonly asked questions, such as how to apply for a job or how to get benefits. Second, the Internet has made it easier for citizens to communicate with their elected representatives. About 4000 people have contacted my web site in the last year, and many constituents now send e-mail messages to my office. Third, the Internet provides a wide-range of fora for citizens to debate and discuss political issues, from 3-mails and chat rooms to ideologically-oriented web sites.

The Internet has also revolutionized media coverage of Washington. When I first came to Congress in the mid-1960s, most Americans got their news on current events from the morning paper and the evening news. Today, media coverage is almost non-stop, and the Internet has contributed to this trend. For example, the Monica Lewinsky story first broke on a web site, and several news outlets have provided round-the-clock reporting on the scandal from their web sites. Some would say the Internet is feeding the public's appetite for information. Others

would argue that it has lowered media standards, opening the floodgates to unrestrained speculation.

AREAS OF POSSIBLE REGULATION

Congress will focus its legislative efforts on the Internet in four basic areas. First, it will consider various consumer protection bills, including measures to restrict junk e-mail, protect the privacy of personal information in government databases, and, most importantly, limit pornography and gambling on the Internet. Congress passed legislation in 1996 making it a crime to knowingly send or display indecent material over the Internet, but the Supreme Court invalidated the law on free speech grounds. Supporters say restrictions are necessary to limit access by minors to such materials. Opponents respond that parents, not the government, should control what their children see, that most Internet providers, such as America Online and Prodigy, already give parents and schools the tools to screen out offensive materials, and that regulating pornography will be difficult because U.S. laws don't reach web sites established overseas. We want to protect children from inappropriate material, but we also want to protect the exploding commercial potential of the Internet.

Second, Congress will debate measures relating to taxation of Internet commerce. One recent study estimated that the value of goods and services traded over the Internet will grow from \$8 billion in 1997 to \$327 billion in 2002. Those figures do not include consumers who are increasingly shopping on the Internet as they become more comfortable with the technology and more aware of the protections against credit card fraud. Many state and local governments, concerned about the shift of commerce to the Internet, want to impose taxes on Internet transactions. The challenge is determining which jurisdiction should levy the taxes, or whether state and local governments should be allowed to tax Internet commerce at all.

Third, Congress will consider bills involving the export of encryption, which is data scrambling technology used to prevent unauthorized access to electronic data on the Internet. Encryption, for example, may be used to secure credit card purchases over the Internet, or to restrict access to certain government web sites. The encryption issue is very contentious. Bills have been introduced to ease restrictions on the export of encryption products so that U.S. manufacturers are on a level playing field with their overseas competitors. The White House, however, has opposed relaxing export controls because of concerns that widespread use of sophisticated encryption will hamper law enforcement and intelligence gathering.

Fourth, Congress is reviewing the issue of trademark protection. Currently, the government has contracted with a private entity to assign web site names. Problems arise when entrepreneurs grab an address that is clearly identified with a well-known brand name or even with a governmental entity. Some argue the federal government should plan an enhanced role in resolving trademark disputes, while others favor referring such disputes to an international organization because the Internet transcends national boundaries.

CONCLUSION

The federal government has a legitimate role to play in Internet governance, particularly where interstate commerce, trade and law enforcement are involved. I do believe, however, that Congress should proceed with caution as it debates measures to regulate the Internet. I favor a minimum of regulation, but there are some things, like child molesters who get information from the Internet, that simply cannot be ignored. The

Internet is a powerful, global technology which is changing our society in ways we don't fully understand, and raising complex legal and policy issues we have rarely, if ever, confronted. My sense is that Members of Congress should probably spend more time trying to learn about the complex and technical issues surrounding the Internet before trying to regulate it.

INCREASED MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCES FOR CRIMINALS POSSESSING FIREARMS

SPEECH OF

HON. JON CHRISTENSEN

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 1998

Mr. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 424.

In the 104th Congress, I introduced the Hard Time for Gun Crimes Act of 1996, which made it clear that anyone who commits a felony with a gun should plan on spending the next few decades behind bars—no exceptions.

I am elated that the Leadership has adopted the basis of my bill and incorporated it into this legislation before us today. By adding stiffer penalties for crimes committed with guns, we'll be able to keep those who prey upon our society behind bars where they belong.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this very important piece of legislation, as it will make our homes and neighborhoods safer places to live.

SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY ON NATIONAL TRIO DAY 1998

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, Saturday, February 28, 1998, Chicago State University, a premier institution of higher learning in the First Congressional District, will be celebrating its annual TRIO Day. Congress established TRIO as a federally funded educational program in 1965 to serve disadvantaged first generation college students. This day recognizes the needs of disadvantaged youth and adults aspiring to improve their lives. TRIO Day also reminds us of the federal investment that we must continue to make to ensure that these individuals fulfill their potential and develop as productive members of our communities and of our country.

TRIO programs have proven effective in helping low-income students to succeed in higher education. The activities that TRIO promotes create real opportunities and address the "invisible" barriers of class, race, and culture. TRIO helps students to overcome those academic and social barriers that may pose difficulties for them in a formal educational setting.

TRIO programs truly work. Funding for TRIO supports a range of pro-active interventions to assist students. These include Upward Bound, Student Support Services, Talent Search, Educational Opportunity Centers, and the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement program. TRIO helps students in

the following areas: choosing a college; tutoring; personal and financial counseling; career counseling; workplace and college visits; assistance in obtaining financial aid; and academic assistance in high school or assistance to re-enter high school and college.

Congress can see the positive outcomes from TRIO programs. An estimated two million students have graduated college with TRIO support. Additionally, TRIO has helped to reduce defaults in the federal student loan program by helping low-income Americans to understand their financial aid obligations and to avoid institutions that may promise more than they can deliver.

I salute Chicago State University's tireless efforts to open its doors to TRIO-eligible students. Their ongoing partnership with local schools, businesses, and other community based organizations ensures that TRIO funds will impact students of diverse backgrounds.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that this body join me in saluting Chicago State University on the occasion of National Annual TRIO Day. I am proud to work on behalf of TRIO not only for Chicago State University students, but all disadvantaged students in our nation so they might fulfill their goals for higher education and lifelong learning.

REPRESENTATIVE MEEK HONORS RED MUMFORD, WESTSIDE PROPERTY OWNERS' COMMUNITY ACTIVIST

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, February 19, 1998, the North Miami Westside Property Owners' Association recognized the contributions made to the community by Mr. Red Mumford, a resident of my district. I rise today to add my praises and bring to the attention of my colleagues the outstanding examples of his community activism.

With his signature crown of auburn hair, Red, as his friends know him, has lived in the City of North Miami for 29 years. Most recently, he has served as president of the Westside Property Owners' Association, tackling neighborhood problems like the Pepper Park Rock Pit and the noise caused by area adult entertainment clubs. His eagle eye has kept watch over the city council and he has led the charge on countless issues of importance.

Personally, Red has enjoyed continued support from his wife, Joyce, who is a community activist of her own merit. They are never far apart, even when Red is playing his saxophone with his own jazz band.

What speaks loudest about the man, however, are those actions which go largely unnoticed by the general public. Though his children have grown, Red continues to act as a positive role model for the kids in his neighborhood. He set up a trampoline in his yard and a basketball net in his driveway. He even allows the kids to swim in the family pool. In a world where neighbors continually grow more distant, Red goes out of his way to provide constructive activities for those children fortunate to live in his area. Never once has he asked for anything in return.

I am proud to have a man of the stature of Red Mumford living in my congressional district. His years of hard work have not gone unnoticed by his friends and family. I wish him continued success in all his endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO CAPT. JOHN HOGAN ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE POSITION OF CHIEF COUNSEL OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

HON. ROBERT SMITH

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a man whose love for his country and its farmers stands as a far greater testament to his character than mere words ever could. John Hogan, Captain, United States Naval Reserve, retired from the position of Chief Counsel to the House Committee on Agriculture on January 31, 1998. His retirement marks a great loss to this Committee, which will surely miss his unrivaled knowledge of America's agricultural laws and policies.

Captain Hogan came to Washington D.C. in 1969 when he joined the staff of the House Committee on the District of Columbia. His boss was the Ranking Republican, Congressman Archer Nelson, from John's home state of Minnesota. Alas, farming ran in John's blood, so in 1975 he moved to the House Committee on Agriculture where he served as Associate Counsel. In 1979 he was promoted to Minority Counsel and then, with the Republican majority in 1995, John became Chief Counsel to the Committee. In this position he has ably served both myself and my immediate predecessor, now Senator PAT ROBERTS, as well as three different Republican Ranking Members.

Mr. Speaker, this Irish-American son of the soil still owns the same farm in Janesville, Minnesota that was homesteaded by his family many years ago. Yet, while dreams of dairy cows and topsoil may have danced in his head, he was so committed to his job that for almost everyday of his long career he was the first one into and the last one out of the office. Because of this, it was often remarked by his co-workers that John never left, but in fact evidence that he did from time to time leave his desk can be found in the impressive list of academic achievements he has compiled. Captain Hogan owns a Bachelor's degree from the University of Minnesota, an LLB from George Washington University, an LLM from Georgetown, and an MBA from American University.

John put this knowledge to work, and America's farm laws reflect his tremendous understanding of what it takes to keep America the breadbasket of the world.

America's farm communities could not have asked for a better friend or more dedicated servant than Captain Hogan. His long and distinguished career is a remarkable testament to a remarkable man. Mr. Speaker, I know that this whole body rises with me to say to John Hogan, Captain, you have left this Committee better than you found it; you have given of yourself, so that others might have more to receive; you have set an example that others may try to emulate, though equal it they never can. For all you have done, this body and your country thanks you. Have a happy retirement.

1998: THE YEAR OF ARMS CONTROL

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to my colleagues' attention a recent op-ed by Senator JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr., entitled *Let 1998 Be the Year of Arms Control*. The excellent article appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor* on February 23, 1998.

I ask that this article be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

The article follows:

[From the *Christian Science Monitor*, Feb. 23, 1998]

LET 1998 BE THE YEAR OF ARMS CONTROL

(By Joseph R. Biden, Jr.)

An increasingly chaotic world demands US leadership across a wide front. From NATO enlargement to Bosnia to Iraq to the Asian economic crisis to the United Nations, the US carries a heavy load.

But those aren't the only problems we face. Arms control has become the forgotten stepchild in foreign policy. We face grave threats to the safety and well-being of the American people. To meet them, the president and Congress should give higher priority to critical arms control initiatives this year.

First, we should implement the Chemical Weapons Convention. Last April, the US ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention outlawing poison gas. Russia, China, India, Iran, and many others also joined. China and India admitted for the first time to having chemical weapons and related facilities, which must be destroyed under the treaty.

But the US is now in violation of the treaty because Congress has failed to enact legislation needed to bring us into compliance. The national security consequences are serious. Until we come into compliance, for example, the US cannot effectively demand that Iran declare and destroy all its chemical weapons facilities—which potentially threaten US forces in Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf.

Second, we should ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. CTBT will inhibit nuclear powers from developing new classes of nuclear weapons and make it extremely difficult for non-nuclear countries to develop sophisticated nuclear weapons at all. Limiting other countries' nuclear efforts will enhance our deterrent posture, which remains vital to world security. It is no accident that the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff and his four immediate predecessors have all endorsed ratification of this treaty.

BACKING NONPROLIFERATION

The non-nuclear states consider CTBT an act of good faith by the nuclear powers, in return for their agreeing to permanent nuclear nonproliferation. If we were to reject CTBT and resume testing, as treaty opponents have urged, the nuclear nonproliferation regime could well collapse.

Third, we should ratify the START and ABM Treaty "strategic package." After the Russian Duma ratifies START II, President Clinton will submit to the Senate a package of modifications to the START treaties and the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. These needed modifications will pave the way for further control of strategic missiles and nuclear warheads under START III and safeguard our ABM research programs.

Some Republicans would kill the ABM treaty outright. That, in turn, would kill the START process: Russia will not give up its

dangerous multiple-warhead missiles if the US moves to build nationwide missile defenses. Scuttling START would be costly and harmful to US national security and would undermine continued adherence to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty by non-nuclear states.

Rejection of the ABM treaty succession agreement would also alienate Ukraine and Kazakhstan. These two nations view the ABM agreement as validating their sovereignty vis-a-vis Russia. If we reject the treaty, they might seek nuclear weapons for protection, thus increasing the risk of a nuclear war in Europe.

Fourth, we should ratify an Anti-Personnel Landmine Protocol. Landmines have produced carnage from Angola to Bosnia, from Afghanistan to Cambodia. The Ottawa Convention banning these mines is controversial. As an alternative, the Senate can and should approve the amended landmine protocol to the Convention on Conventional Weapons, which would limit their use, require safety features, establish an obligation to clean up minefields, and extend the law to civil wars, as well as international ones.

The protocol, which is supported by many powers that would not sign the Ottawa Convention, could save innocent lives while we work to make a worldwide ban feasible for all countries.

INCLUDE LIGHT WEAPONS

Fifth, we should seek to control light weapons. We limit weapons of mass destruction, but there are few if any restraints on the most pervasive weapons. From border wars to civil wars to drug wars, the weapons of choice are the military assault rifle, the grenade, and the mortar. American tourists, students, missionaries, and business people have already fallen victim to these weapons. It is in our national interest to control them. The US supports voluntary bans on arms sales to the warring parties in Afghanistan and should explore the potential for other embargoes. The most effective short-term approach may be embargoes on ammunition. But this will work only if other light-arms producers join in. As a first step, Congress should urge US discussions with our European allies on a joint policy.

Arms buy-back programs can also work, if we help protect people who turn in their arms and offer them a decent livelihood. The US assisted a successful buy-back program in Mali, and Congress should fund more such efforts.

This ambitious wish-list will not be completed in a single year. But these issues affect the safety and lives of our citizens, and we should start addressing them.

HONORING THE CENTRAL FAIRFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PUBLIC SAFETY AWARD WINNERS

HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce Public Safety Award Winners. The Public Safety Awards honor the City of Fairfax's finest Police Officers and Fire & Rescue personnel who have gone above and beyond the call of duty on a daily basis. On Thursday, February 26, 1998, the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce will present the Annual Public Safety Awards to these brave public servants at the Fairfax City Holiday Inn.

1997 Officer of the Year: Detective Albert L. Leightley, III. On October 10, 1997, Detective Leightley successfully apprehended two credit card fraud suspects. From his interview with these suspects and from further investigations, Detective Leightley was led to other accomplices. By the time Detective Leightley closed this case, he had eight criminal arrests and had assisted the surrounding jurisdictions in closing numerous criminal cases of their own. Detective Leightley is known for solving the "impossible" larceny cases, often given few facts, leads or physical evidence. He has an outstanding record of closing forty-nine percent of his cases with a sixty-four percent arrest rate for 1997.

1997 Dispatcher of the Year: Betty I. Powers. On September 21, 1997, Dispatcher Powers was working alone in communications when two serious incidents occurred almost simultaneously. She remained calm under pressure as she dispatched police and fire department support to a felony traffic stop and to a hostile fight situation. This is just one of many examples of the professionalism and dedication to duty routinely displayed by Dispatcher Powers.

1997 Firefighter/Paramedic of the Year: Fire Medic Bruce Suslowitz. During the seven years Fire Medic Suslowitz has been with the Fairfax City Fire Department, he has consistently performed outstanding service to those in need. He has gained the trust and faith of his patients with his compassionate, caring and professional manner. He has not only been an invaluable asset to the community but to the Fire & Rescue Department as well. He has participated on numerous department committees, created several public service programs, and has served as a mentor to Paramedic interns.

1997 Lifesaving Award: Officer Eduardo J. Azcarate. In the early morning hours of September 21, 1997, Officer Azcarate was dispatched to George Mason University to provide assistance in ending a large fight. When he arrived on the scene, he rushed to the aid of a stabbing victim. While his fellow officers controlled the crowd, Officer Azcarate performed rescue breathing on the victim until Fire & Rescue units arrived. Officer Azcarate helped saved the victim's life by stepping into a hostile situation and without hesitation, performing emergency medical intervention.

1997 Lifesaving Award: Battalion Chief Kenneth Hahn. On July 17, 1997, Battalion Chief Hahn responded to the home of a man who was having chest pains, but did not want fire department aid. The man insisted on waiting for his friend to take him to the hospital. Battalion Chief Hahn was concerned for the man's well-being and insisted on staying with the man until his friend got there. Ten minutes later, the man went into cardiac arrest. Battalion Chief Hahn quickly called to help, and initiated Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation until more fire department assistance arrived. Battalion Chief Hahn then addressed the concerns of the man's family and friends. Battalion Chief Hahn's conscientious actions were vital in saving this man's life.

1997 Lifesaving Award: Captain John Ahrens and Fire Medic William Schwarz. On September 29, 1997, Medic 33 was dispatched for an obstetrical emergency. When Captain Ahrens and Fire Medic Schwarz arrived, they found a woman lying on her back with a 2 month premature infant on her chest.

Captain Ahrens and Fire Medic Schwarz worked feverishly to resuscitate the little boy. They were continually challenged to improvise and reassess all treatment efforts due to the extremely small size of their patient. Due to their professional, capable, and highly competent performance under difficult circumstances, the infant was delivered to the emergency room with the best possible chances for survival.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to send my sincere gratitude and heartfelt appreciation to those distinguished public servants who are truly deserving of the title "hero." Their professionalism and initiatives have earned them the well deserved Public Safety Awards from the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce. It is because of these outstanding public servants and their peers that Fairfax City continues to be one of the finest cities in the world.

RECOMMENDING AN ARTICLE BY
R.C. SPROUL, JR.

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recommend to my colleagues the following article by a young writher, R.C. Sproul, Jr., the son of the remarkable theologian and author. While this article is indeed instructive and important in regards to the recent situation with Iraq, I believe that the author does a fine job addressing the much broader topic of following the Constitution in all matters, including those of inciting war and promoting peace. His article was written for *CovSyn*, which is a publication of the Kuyper Institute, in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

Our founding fathers formed our government to ensure that no single person could have complete power or authority over any aspect of government; to give anyone that kind of power is to invite tyranny.

I urge my colleagues to read and consider Mr. Sproul's article. We all took an oath to uphold the Constitution: an oath which we must take seriously if we are to promote liberty, peace and civil society.

BOMBING THE CONSTITUTION

By R.C. Sproul, Jr.

When was the last time the United States went to war? That's not exactly an easy question to answer. If, however, the Constitution is in fact the law of the land, the answer is December 8, 1941. You see, the Constitution says that only the Congress has the power to declare war on another nation. That would seem to mean that without such a declaration, there is no war. Some kept this pretense the first time the United States went to war after World War II. Some called the Korean War a "police action." Vietnam, though there was again no declaration of war, was known as a war.

Since Vietnam U.S. soldiers have shot at soldiers from other countries, and been shot at, in Libya, Grenada, Panama, Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, and Iraq. And it appears we're going to non-war again in Iraq sometime soon. Where, to quote Mr. Dole, is the outrage? How is it that the Constitution can be so brazenly ignored?

Some argue that in an age of intercontinental ballistic missiles, that the requirement for a Congressional declaration is out-

dated. In none of the above "non-wars" however, have such missiles constituted a treat to American safety. And even if such were the case, why not change the Constitution to reflect the current situation?

Others suggest that we have no need for this old rule since we now have the "War Powers Act" which gives congressional approval for the President to use the military freely within a certain time frame. But that's not at all the same thing. The Constitution no where gives the Congress the right to shirk their role as declarers of war.

Still others try to argue that the United Nations security council now serves that role. Again though, the Constitution says nothing about giving them this role. Neither does it say that a sufficient number of handshakes with Madelaine Albright shall be a substitute for Congressional action.

And still some go on insisting that these conflicts aren't wars. With the U.S.S. Nimitz in the Suez Canal, with 3,000 ground troops being sent to join the 1,500 already in Kuwait, with Stealth bombers lined up and ready to go, this is nonsense. When soldiers shoot at each other, whether they're in a foxhole, or in a room full of computers, or 35,000 feet in the air, that's war.

The only explanation I can think of is that no one really knows what the Constitution says. And while I'm not surprised that government school products would be ignorant (how can they know the Constitution when they can't read it?), what frightens me is that each and every soldier, from the buck private loading the cargo planes, to the lieutenants fresh out of ROTC, to the Commander-in-Chief, all of them have take a solemn oath to uphold and protect the Constitution.

These United States are no longer operating under the Constitution. We, like those great nations which have come and gone before us, have sunk to the level of empire. And you, friend, are no free man or woman, but just another subject. Remember that as you wave that flag in honor of the bombing heroes.

1998 CONGRESSIONAL OBSERVANCE
OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. GLENN POSHARD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 1998

Mr. POSHARD. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to join my colleagues today in a celebration of Black History Month. We have come together today to remember the struggle of African-Americans, to commemorate their accomplishments and to honor their contributions. While it is my sincere hope that my fellow citizens do this every day of the year, it is nonetheless appropriate that we set aside the month of February to pay special attention to both the history and future of African-Americans in this country.

As a former history teacher and a longtime scholar of American history, I am very familiar with and deeply grateful for the countless contributions that African-Americans have made to American identity, culture, science, literature, arts and so much more. I am continually fascinated by the depth and intricacy of the American experience throughout history, and I recognize the critical role that the African-American community has played in its development.

I represent the great state of Illinois, and in particular a congressional district rich in history. Illinois is fittingly known as the Land of Lincoln, a state which boasts the childhood home of Abraham Lincoln, the site of his first law practice, the venue for the Lincoln-Douglas debates, and the State Capitol in Springfield, where Mr. Lincoln spent a portion of his venerable political career. I am enormously proud to have served in that same legislative body, working always in the shadow of the memory of the man who had the courage to declare that under a system of slavery, our nation could never be truly free.

Near Shawneetown, Illinois, there is a unique historical landmark known as the Old Slave House, which was built in 1834. During the pre-Civil War era, the Old Slave House served as a holding place for escaped slaves who had been captured and were awaiting return to their owners. The Slave House is the only known remaining structure to have been used by kidnappers operating a sort of "reverse" Underground Railroad and is considered a key site by researchers and historians seeking to preserve relics of this critical time in American history. I am committed to ensuring that the Old Slave House and other sites receive the recognition and protection necessary for their preservation, so that future generations may benefit from the important lessons they have to teach.

Mr. Speaker, let me close by urging my colleagues and all Americans to embrace the opportunities provided by the celebration of Black History Month. This is a chance to educate a new generation about the experiences and contributions of African-Americans. This is an opportunity to pay tribute to the prominent African-Americans who have given so much to this country throughout its history. And perhaps most importantly, this month should serve as a somber reminder of a grim history of hundreds of years of slavery. Let us never forget what came before and let us never cease our efforts to rid this great nation of the racial discrimination that has for so long been used to justify it.

TRIBUTE TO SELMA LARSON

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say a few words about one of my constituents, whose tireless efforts on behalf of senior citizens deserves respect and recognition.

Selma Larson is a columnist for the *Adrian Daily Telegram* in Adrian, Michigan. Her focus for a number of years has been on issues impacting senior citizens. Along with her column, she hosts forums to give voice to the concerns of seniors.

Selma doesn't expect you to agree with her on every issue. And, as it should be, she does not hesitate to take public servants to task when she holds a different view. But her commitment to improving the quality of life of our senior citizens is unquestionable. I always take note of her opinions and value her insights very much. In a very unique and important way, Selma Larson ably conveys to me the views of like-minded seniors in Lenawee

County. She does this without expecting recognition or reward for her efforts.

For these reasons, when I was asked to nominate a candidate for the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Ageless Heroes Award, Selma's name was the first to come to mind. I know her colleagues and her friends in Lenawee County would agree that she is worthy of this honor.

Mr. Speaker, Selma Larson, through her vigor, hard work, and dedication, serves as a role model to us all. She proves every day that in America a person with commitment and drive can have a lasting impact on issues affecting all of us.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION OF CONGRESSMAN TOM A. COBURN, M.D.
ON ROLL CALL VOTE NUMBER 557

HON. TOM A. COBURN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Speaker, In conducting my end of the year of review this past month I discovered that without explanation, my vote was not recorded on Roll Call vote number 557, passage of H.R. 1270, Amendments to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982. I was in fact present for this vote and did in fact vote Yea.

EQUITY IN TRANSPORTATION
FUNDING

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, as a "donor state," Californians pay more in federal taxes at the gas pump than they receive back in federal funds for highway construction, bridge, and road maintenance. When Congress re-authorizes transportation funding legislation this year, I will support equity in transportation funding for California.

Taxpayers in my state expect their hard-earned tax dollars to be used for improvements in their communities and across California. Unfortunately, that is rarely the case. The truth is, some of the money is always used in some other town, in some other state. Mr. Speaker, we should stop asking California taxpayers to pay for highway and infrastructure improvements they will likely never see.

California communities are struggling to maintain their infrastructure. Many communities, including those I represent, are finding it virtually impossible to keep up with growing populations and business development. This is not only unfair, it is becoming unsafe.

Congress must support more equitable funding formulas for states that traditionally pay much more than they receive for their tax dollars, especially California. Mr. Speaker, we must enact a fairer transportation funding formula this year. I urge my California colleagues to unanimously support a funding formula that is fair for California taxpayers.

IN HONOR OF THE CITY OF ELIZABETH RECEIVING THE 1998 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AWARD FOR THE NATION'S TOP URBAN ENTERPRISE ZONE PROGRAM

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the city of Elizabeth, New Jersey for receiving the 1998 Community Empowerment Award from the National Association of State Development Agencies (NASDA) for developing the nation's most successful Urban Enterprise Zone.

The city's UEZ program, which is administered by the Elizabeth Development Company, beat out more than 3,000 eligible zone program participants from 40 states for the honor. The award will be presented February 26th at the annual NASDA Awards Luncheon in Washington, D.C.

In five years Elizabeth's UEZ program has generated over \$30 million in revenue. In addition, the program has helped jump start over \$500 million in economic development and provide more than 6,000 jobs for the region. In the future, the program expects to add 5,000 more jobs with the development of the New Jersey Gardens MetroMall.

Elizabeth's UEZ program is a model for how targeted sales and business tax cuts coupled with effective community programs can serve to spur growth in our urban areas. This nationally renowned program has attracted such visitors as Boston Mayor Tom Menino and has brought innovative approaches to nurturing relationships between private and public sector agencies.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped make this program so successful. I would especially like to congratulate Elizabeth Mayor Christopher Bollwage; Executive Director of the Elizabeth Development Company, Ed Kolling; Deputy Executive Director of the EDC, Bill O'Dea; Planning Director, George Devanney; UEZ Coordinator, Don Devanney; Senior Project Coordinator, Don Goncalves and Community Relations Coordinator, Dave Strochak.

TRIBUTE TO FAMILY
CONNECTIONS ADOPTIONS

HON. GEORGE P. RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Family Connections Adoptions for over 15 years of devoted service to the community. Family Connections Adoptions helps families adopt children with special needs from all over the globe.

Family Connections Adoptions began in February, 1983. In 15 years the agency has placed over 1400 children, about half of which have been from California. The rest have been from developing countries—India, Korea, Thailand, South America, Vietnam, Romania, Ethiopia, China, Russia and others. The agency began by serving families in three countries with an office in Modesto, California. The serv-

ice area has expanded gradually and now covers the whole state of California. There are branch offices in Sacramento, Fresno, and Oceanside.

The children range in age from infancy to fifteen years. The children are of every race and ethnic background. All of the children have been "waiting children," which means that they have some special needs. These special needs can consist of medical challenges which include blindness, deafness, missing limbs, cerebral palsy, heart problems, cleft lip and palate, hydrocephalus, failure to thrive, severe asthma, fetal alcohol syndrome, and drug addiction. Some of the children at Family Connections have been free of medical challenges but their age, large sibling group, or minority race kept them waiting for an adoptive family.

The family who adopt through Family Connections vary in age, income, education, race, and family size. Couples who have been married two years and singles are welcome to apply. For some, the adoption is a first child for the family. For others, the new addition joins a family with other children. The common factor all families share is their desire to nurture a child.

Many of the agency staff are adoptive parents themselves and they relate to adopting families with warmth and understanding. Family Connections has a commitment to children who wait for permanent, loving homes and to the families who long to open their hearts and homes to the waiting children.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I pay tribute to Family Connections for their contribution to child adoption. It is the care and devotion displayed by Family Connections that warrant this recognition. I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Family Connections many more years of success.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CABLE
CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT OF
1998

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Cable Consumer Protection Act of 1998.

I am pleased to be offering this legislation today with my good friend, the gentleman from Connecticut, Mr. SHAYS. The purpose of our legislative proposal is quite straightforward. We believe that Congress must act to continue consumer price controls past March 31, 1999, when they are scheduled to end pursuant to the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

The Telecommunications Act mandates that after March 31, 1999, consumer price controls for cable programming services end, a policy premised on the assumption that subsequent to enactment of the Act the telephone industry would mount a large scale assault of cable markets across the country. It is clear that competition to the cable industry has not materialized in any significant way after passage of the Telecommunications Act and that except for a few exceptions in limited areas of the country, the phone industry has largely pulled back from entering the cable business. Moreover, the cold reality is that for the overwhelming majority of consumers, an alternative wireline competitor is not going to show

up in their neighborhood anytime soon to provide price competition to the incumbent cable company.

The effect of lifting consumer price controls 13 months from now in the absence of robust competition would be to permit cable monopolies to charge what they want for everything but the broadcast-tier basic service without an effective marketplace check on their ability to raise rates excessively. This means that for the vast majority of cable consumers, the expanded tier of service that typically includes CNN, ESPN, TNT, DISCOVERY, MTV, and other popular cable programming services will be offered without any price limits in place.

Without a legislative change to extend consumer price protections for cable consumers past March 31, 1999, consumers will be hit with a cable rate El Nino. Congress must act in time to adjust the law to take note of the fact that cable competition has not developed sufficiently to warrant lifting consumer price controls. The recent cable competition report from the FCC in January underscores this fact. The new Chairman of the FCC, William Kennard, noted when releasing the report that policymakers "should no longer have high hopes that a vigorous and widespread competitive environment will magically emerge in the next several months."

Our legislation would simply repeal this sunset date from our communications statutes. Cable operators would then be deregulated through two underlying provisions that are already available under the law.

The first test for deregulating an incumbent cable operator in a franchise area that is contained in the Communications Act of 1934 would be met if emerging competitors served more than 15 percent of the households in a particular franchise area (see Section 623(l)(1)(B)). Second, if a local phone company offers a competing cable service directly to subscribers in a franchise area then the incumbent operator is immediately deregulated, without waiting for the phone company to garner 15 percent of the market (see Section 623(l)(1)(D)).

As I said during deliberations on the Act in 1995, when Mr. SHAYS and I offered a cable consumer protection amendment, and which I continue to believe today, sound public policy should compel us to repeal consumer price protections only when effective competition provides an affordable alternative choice for consumers, making regulatory protections unnecessary.

Until that time, the question boils down to this—do you want your monopolies regulated or unregulated?

In my view, such protections should not be lifted on an arbitrary deadline set on the basis of politics instead of economics. I urge my colleagues to support this effort on behalf of millions of cable consumers across the country.

INCREASED MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCES FOR CRIMINALS POSSESSING FIREARMS

SPEECH OF

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 1998

Ms. DeGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose H.R. 424. I strongly support effective

crime control and crime prevention measures. I am also a steadfast proponent of smart gun control laws and tough sentences for gun-related violence. However, this misguided attempt imposes penalties for possessing a weapon that are far more severe than are the sentences for many violent crimes, like manslaughter. It is outrageous that the penalties imposed by this legislation for a first time offender for drug possession who has a gun at the time of the crime is ten years while a rapist receives only six years. We need to get tough on crime, but we also must be smart in our crime control strategies. Mandatory sentencing does not allow judicial flexibility to address each crime individually, imposing tough sentences when necessary and second chances when warranted.

The severity of sentences should reflect the seriousness of the crime committed. The sentencing policy included in this legislation which punishes criminals based not on their crime but on whether or not they possess a gun and the type of gun they possess simply does not make sense.

JAVITS-WAGNER-O'DAY BLIND WORKER OF THE YEAR

HON. JOHN E. PETERSON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Joyce A. Gnoffo of Williamsport, Pennsylvania, who has been selected as Blind Worker of the Year as a participant in the Javits-Wagner-O'Day program.

Ms. Gnoffo was nominated for this honor by her co-workers at North Central Sight Services, Inc., which provides a variety of computer media to the U.S. Department of Defense and pressure sensitive labels to General Service Administration. Ms. Gnoffo was selected for this honor as a result of her on-the-job performance at North Central Sight Services, Inc.

I know I am joined by many in congratulating Ms. Gnoffo in this wonderful achievement, and I wish her the very best of luck as she competes nationally for the Peter J. Salmon Award.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity to recognize and to congratulate Joyce A. Gnoffo.

JCAHO ACCREDITATION PROCESS A SHAM; MILLIONS OF LIVES AT RISK AT "ACCREDITED" HOSPITALS

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, a recent investigation of New York City hospitals has uncovered startling evidence of substandard care at hospitals with high accreditation scores from Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (JCAHO). In a scathing report, the Public Advocate for the City of New York presents strong evidence that hospitals circumvent JCAHO's annual announced sur-

vey visits—simply by hiring extra staff to make operations look smoother than they really are.

In too many cases, the report finds that JCAHO's high test scores mask a darker reality—that some accredited hospitals may be endangering the health of patients because they don't meet basic standards of care.

The New York City report demonstrates widespread quality of care problems in 15 accredited City hospitals. For example, it finds: Inadequate supervision that can mean patients are left in pain; substantial delays in treatment of emergency room patients; outdated and broken equipment; overcrowded, understaffed clinics; unsanitary conditions throughout the hospital; incomplete and poorly documented patient charts.

Clearly, when such conditions are present, JCAHO should respond with sanctions, not high praise. Yet only last year, JCAHO flunked fewer than 1% of hospitals. The organization says that it fails so few because it prefers to work with hospitals to "correct" any violations that are detected. But if its accreditation standards are low to begin with, then can consumers and plans really rely on JCAHO reports? This is a critical question for Medicare beneficiaries, since JCAHO-accredited hospitals are "deemed" to have met Medicare's "Conditions of Participation," a key proxy for quality of care.

The weaknesses of JCAHO's current system are made plain in the New York report. Simply put, there are no surprise inspections, and little apparent follow-up of pro-forma walkthroughs. "Simply investigative steps, such as unannounced visits, confidential employee interviews, and document audits" could make a vast difference in what JCAHO actually found.

To make matters worse, under the Joint Commission's arbitrary scoring system, hospitals with serious quality of care problems are often awarded high accreditation scores. In effect, JCAHO surveyors are encouraged to rank hospitals highly on each standard, even if the hospital is unable to meet that standard! This practice makes a mockery of the review process.

In fact, almost all (98 percent) of the institutions surveyed in the New York City study received scores of 80 or better on a 100 point scale, and none had a score below 70! Mr. Speaker, I am astounded that, of the 18,000 institutions surveyed each year, none are judged to fail outright. Nearly all of them met JCAHO standards.

These inflated grades are confusing and misleading. Although each facility is rated on individual standards, the highest score of 1 on a scale of 1 to 5 only indicates 91% compliance; a score of 2 indicates only 76% compliance.

The results of such a skewed system are that public health authorities are left to do the hard work of sanctioning and shutting down facilities that are appalling deficiencies.

In 1994, New York City's Union Hospital was reviewed by JCAHO and given a score of 92. Three years later, in March 1997, the hospital's score rose to a near-perfect 97. But later that year, the New York Department of Health concluded that hospital staff had failed to properly treat high-risk emergency room patients, including two rape survivors, and was using outdated and expired drugs. Nurses pointed to understaffing and a lack of experienced staff in the pediatric, post-partum, and

maternity departments and the emergency room. By October, public health authorities moved to partially shut the hospital, which has since filed for bankruptcy.

In Brooklyn, New York, Interfaith Medical Center received a JCAHO score of 89 in 1995 that was raised to 94 a year later. Strange, because a 1997 Wall Street Journal article on Interfaith painted a picture of a badly deteriorated facility, with heating and plumbing systems in bad disrepair and non-functioning elevators. Hospital staff, the story found, had to stave off invasions of rats, mice, and flies. Even the hospital's president, Corbett Price, was quoted as saying, "This hospital is being held together by rubber bands and Band-Aids."

JCAHO's problems are not confined to New York. In Las Vegas, poor care at Columbia/HCA's JCAHO-accredited Sunrise Hospital generated numerous newspaper articles and television pieces in October 1996, ultimately causing JCAHO to place the facility on probation a year later.

Just recently, JCAHO placed Columbia's North Houston Medical Center on preliminary non-accreditation status—but only because an employee called a hotline number to report that problems had been overlooked—including a high level of incomplete patient records. After returning to North Houston in December, JCAHO downgraded the hospital's status.

In other cases, where serious problems have been brought to light by state inspection teams, JCAHO has proved reluctant to downgrade a hospital's accreditation status.

Given this spotty record, I am outraged by media reports that the Joint Commission is considering softening its already loophole-ridden review process. According to a leading trade publication, Modern Healthcare, JCAHO may move to allow hospitals that self-report a "sentinel event" within five days of its occurrence will be put on accreditation watch. The definition of "a sentinel event" is one that could lead to the death or serious injury of a patient.

The misguided scoring and lax oversight documented in the New York report suggests that another system of oversight is needed. I am cosponsoring two bills that would overhaul the current voluntary review process. The Accreditation Accountability Act of 1997 (H.R. 800) would require all Medicare-accrediting organizations to hold public meetings. One-third of governing board members would be members of the public.

Second, the Medicare and Medicaid Provider Review Act of 1997 (H.R. 2543) would levy user fees on hospitals and other health care providers to underwrite the costs of independent federal compliance and audits. I am happy to report that President Clinton included the heart of this bill in the budget package he recently sent to Congress.

For too long, we've given JCAHO and the Health care industry the benefit of the doubt. Self-policing simply isn't working. The New York City report is all the evidence we need to show that patients suffer—sometimes fatally—from substandard care provided by JCAHO-accredited hospitals. Let's put patients' needs first, back where they belong.

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO HARRY THOMPSON ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to a truly outstanding individual from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District, Mr. Harry Thompson. On Saturday, February 28, 1998, Mr. Thompson will be retiring from the Ottawa County Board of Elections.

Mr. Speaker, Harry Thompson has dedicated much of his life to serving his country, his community, and his party. Mr. Thompson has served as a member of the Board of Elections for ten years, the past eight as the Chairman. During his tenure on the board of elections, Mr. Thompson was a strong public servant, an impartial judge of electoral issues, and a valued colleague to those with whom he worked.

Like his unwavering service to the Board of Elections, Mr. Thompson dedicated a great deal of time to the Ottawa County Republican Party. Mr. Thompson served as the county GOP Chairman for many years, retiring just this past year. Mr. Thompson diligently worked to encourage and support increased participation in our political process. His support of grassroots political exercises has certainly helped to strengthen the free form of government we enjoy.

Mr. Thompson has placed an enormous emphasis on service to government, to politics, and to the community. We have often heard that America works because of the unselfish contributions of its citizens. I know that Ottawa County is a better place because of the countless hours given by Harry Thompson. His public service and commitment to Ottawa County will be sorely missed.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the flag being flown over the Capitol on Mr. Thompson's behalf, I would urge my colleagues to rise and join me in paying special tribute to Mr. Harry Thompson, a true American, a dedicated public servant, and a good friend. We wish him well in his retirement and in the years ahead.

A SPECIAL SALUTE TO JUDGE WILLIAM K. THOMAS

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to salute an outstanding member of the judicial system, United States District Judge William K. Thomas. Judge Thomas recently retired after nearly 32 years on the federal bench. I take special pride in recognizing him at this time.

President Lyndon Johnson in 1966 appointed Judge Thomas to the U.S. District Court in Cleveland. In an article which appeared on January 30, 1988, the Plain Dealer newspaper paid tribute to Judge Thomas, highlighting his distinguished career. The article is entitled, "A Fair Piece of Work," and recognizes an individual who earned a reputation as a thorough, hard-working and dedi-

cated judge. His reputation for fairness earned him the respect of his colleagues and peers.

Mr. Speaker, during my career as a practicing attorney, I tried cases in Judge Thomas' court. In my opinion, he is one of the finest trial judges in the nation. He is also a gentleman whom I respect and greatly admire. For this reason, I want to share the Plain Dealer article with my colleagues and others around the nation. I extend my personal congratulations to Judge Thomas and wish him the very best in his retirement years.

A FAIR PIECE OF WORK

(By Mark Rollenhagen)

When William K. Thomas was sworn in as a federal judge, one of the speakers at his swearing-in ceremony invoked the words of a former law partner who had long ago said Thomas could never be a good lawyer.

"The trouble with Bill Thomas is he wants to be fair to both sides," the partner had said.

Thomas, who retires today after nearly 32 years on the federal court bench in Cleveland, flashed a contented smile earlier this week when he recalled those words.

At 86 years old, he leaves what he sometimes refers to as "the judging business" with a reputation as a meticulous, hard-working jurist who treated lawyers, criminals and parties to civil lawsuits with respect and fairness.

"He's one of the best I've ever tried a case in front of," said James R. Willis, a veteran criminal defense lawyer who represented Cleveland Mafia boss James T. Licavoli when Licavoli was convicted in 1982 of racketeering. "He was patient, he listened to what you were saying and he ruled decisively. That's the whole package."

The Licavoli case, in which the mob figure and others were convicted of conspiring to kill mobster Daniel J. Greene, was perhaps the highest profile criminal case of Thomas' career. Greene, killed by a bomb in 1977, was in competition for control of organized crime in the Cleveland area.

But Thomas also presided over a trial in which porn king Reuben Sturman and several associates were found not guilty of obscenity charges, and he helped negotiate an end to a police standoff in 1975 with bank robber Eddie Watkins, who was holding hostages at a bank in Cleveland.

Watkins was sentenced to prison in 1967 by Thomas, but escaped.

Watkins had asked for Thomas.

As for civil lawsuits, Thomas also shepherded a settlement of lawsuits brought by students injured when Ohio National Guardsmen fired on a crowd of demonstrators at Kent State University. With the jury deliberating, Thomas met with the lawyers in his chambers and pounded out a carefully worded agreement in 1979 in which the state of Ohio agreed to pay the plaintiffs \$675,000.

Thomas said it would be difficult to pick out any of his cases as being bigger or more difficult than any of the others. He said he had never been one to look back.

What he has enjoyed the most, the judge said, is the view of life he had from the bench.

"I think the contact with individuals that comes to a trial judge is a great reward," Thomas said. "You have a chance to see the ebb and flow of humanity."

Thomas said his judicial temperament was formed in part by the experience of being dressed down in front of a client by a federal judge when he was a lawyer. "I vowed that I would never do that if I became a judge," Thomas said.

Thomas became a judge in 1950 when his friend, then-Gov. Frank Lausche, appointed

him to the bench in Geauga County. He was credited with closing the Pettibone Club, a gambling club in Chardon.

He later moved to Chagrin Falls and was appointed to the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas bench by Lausche in 1953. He was the judge who released Sam Sheppard on \$50,000 bond in 1954 after Sheppard was arrested and charged with murdering his wife, Marilyn.

Thomas served on the Common Pleas bench until 1966 when President Lyndon Johnson appointed him to the U.S. District Court in Cleveland.

He earned a reputation as a hard-working, thorough judge who worked through most federal holidays. He was careful and deliberate in what he said, preferring to issue his decisions in writing and avoiding rash decisions from the bench.

His approach to the courtroom was simple, he said: "Keep your head. Don't sound off until you've really had an opportunity to think things through."

Retired U.S. District Judge Thomas D. Lambros—who was appointed by Johnson in 1967—said he first met Thomas when they were both Common Pleas judges and Thomas was serving as president of a statewide association of judges.

Lambros said Thomas worked hard at improving both the court operations and dealing with the flood of civil rights law that was made in 1960s and 1970s.

"We had to deal with some very important constitutional issues which touched the lives of millions of people," Lambros said. "It was truly one of the highlights of my judicial career to have had the opportunity to serve with Bill Thomas."

Thomas has been a senior judge since 1981, handling a small docket of cases and occasionally handling trials to help out other judges.

He said he was not certain what he would do in complete retirement. His wife, Dorothy, passed away in 1992. He remains close to his four children and plans to do some writing—"nothing fancy, just a few notes for my children," he said.

"I've learned over the years to never look backwards and be thinking in terms of I'm missing what I was doing," he said. "I just try to find new things to do."

JOSÉ V. TOLEDO UNITED STATES POST OFFICE AND COURTHOUSE

HON. CARLOS A. ROMERO-BARCELÓ

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of the outstanding service of the late Judge José Victor Toledo, today I introduce a bill to designate the United States Post Office and Courthouse in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico as the "José V. Toledo United States Post Office and Courthouse."

Judge José Toledo served on the bench of the United States District Court, District of Puerto Rico, from December 1, 1970 to February 1980, when he died in office at the age of 49. He rose to the position of Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court in Puerto Rico and served with great distinction in that capacity until the moment of his untimely death.

"Pepe" Toledo, as he was known to many, was regarded by those who knew him prior to and after his appointment to the Federal bench as a man of paramount integrity and a loyal public servant. Judge Toledo was born August 14, 1931 in Arecibo, Puerto Rico. He

received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Florida in 1952 and a Juris Doctor from the University of Puerto Rico Law School in 1955. Prior to his appointment to the Federal bench, Judge Toledo served as an Assistant United States Attorney, as a partner of several law firms in Puerto Rico, and as a lawyer in local government in Puerto Rico. He served in the United States Army as a Member of the Judge Advocate Corps.

Judge Toledo was also a distinguished leader of the Exchange Clubs of Puerto Rico, through which he proudly served his community in Puerto Rico. He demonstrated his value to the organization through his involvement and commitment both at the local and national levels.

As expressed by the Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court in Puerto Rico, the Honorable Carmen Consuelo Cerezo, on behalf of the judges of the Federal court of Puerto Rico, "Judge José V. Toledo earned the respect of the public, the bar, and the bench for his patience, impartiality, fairness and decorum in the adjudication of the controversies brought before him. Judge Toledo set high standards for himself, yet he had a refreshing humility and capacity to understand the problems of others. His hallmarks were learning in wisdom, tempered by a tremendous feeling for people."

The U.S. Post Office and Courthouse in Old San Juan, built in 1914, stands above the foundations of the ancient-city wall that has guarded the harbor-entrance to the city for more than 300 years. Built only 15 years after Puerto Rico became a U.S. territory, it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places of the U.S. Department of Interior National Park Service. The site represents the eclecticism of American Architecture of the late XIX and early XX centuries, as it integrates American-Spanish-Revival, Sullivaneseque and Beaux Arts Neoclassical Revival styles. The "Correo," as it has been known to generations of Puerto Ricans, is an imposing and beautiful structure which has stood magnificently within the old city walls, and within the hearts of Puerto Ricans as a symbol of the greatness of times past and of the importance of the U.S. Postal Service in Puerto Rico. It is fitting that this structure, so dear to us, should carry the name of Judge José V. Toledo.

The judges of the United States District Court, District of Puerto Rico, who voted unanimously to recommend the naming of the Federal courthouse in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico in honor of José V. Toledo, referred to the late Judge Toledo as a "learned jurist, outstanding citizen, and excellent human being." I am immensely proud to honor his memory with this bill to designate the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico as the "José V. Toledo United States Post Office and Courthouse."

IN MEMORY OF DAVID M. CAWTHORNE, JR., TRANSPORTATION JOURNALIST

HON. BUD SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 1998

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I wish to acknowledge with great sadness, the passing of a widely known and respected transportation

journalist, Mr. David M. Cawthorne, Jr. His untimely passing at the age of 49 in January of this year has left a great gap in the Washington transportation community. Dave spent more than two decades covering regulatory issues at the Department of Transportation and the old Interstate Commerce Commission, as well as its successor, the Surface Transportation Board. It is probably safe to say that there is not a transportation lawyer, executive, or Washington representative who had not encountered Dave during his distinguished career. Many of the people he first met as Congressional staff or agency personnel have now risen to highly responsible executive positions in government and in the private sector. One small measure of this was the large number of his friends in the transportation community who recently attended his funeral in Washington. Rather than attempt to encapsulate Dave's career myself, I think that his personal legacy was better captured by the Chairperson of the Surface Transportation Board, Linda Morgan—herself a former Congressional staffer—in her memorial address at Dave's funeral. As a tribute to Mr. Cawthorne and the highest of journalistic standards he always stood for, I ask that her remarks be reprinted here.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF DAVID M. CAWTHORNE, JR.

COMMENTS BY LINDA J. MORGAN, CHAIRMAN,
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD, JANUARY
21, 1998

Today we are gathered to celebrate our association with Dave, and in particular the many ways in which he inspired us and the many gifts that he gave us. I am truly honored to be able to share some of my thoughts about a very special friend and colleague.

I have thought a great deal about Dave over the last couple of days, as I know all of you have. In thinking about Dave, I am reminded that, in a town where there is so much focus on what titles people have or what job accomplishments people can claim, it is important to remember that what is a true test of a person is not so much what that person has done, but how that person has done it, or who that person really is.

Dave was quite a person. He was an individual of immeasurable human decency, profound inner strength, deep intellectual curiosity and commitment to thoroughness, impressive personal and professional integrity, and an unforgettable uniqueness.

All of us can relay our own experiences with Dave's decency. There was the call to congratulate you on something or the offer of support when you needed it, or the way he completed almost every contact with "sorry to disturb you" or "thanks so much for your time." Recently, my 12-year old daughter was with me at the office, and we ran into Dave and had a conversation. When I told her that my friend Dave had died, she said: "I remember Dave. He was that man we met at your office who seemed so nice." Dave, seen clearly through the unjudged eyes of a 12-year old, was a person who always remembered mutual respect and common courtesy.

And then there was his inner strength. No matter what personal or professional challenge he faced, he kept on going. He seemed to understand that life in its fullest is one challenge after another to tackle, one obstacle after another to overcome. And perhaps because of that awareness, he never stopped trying, and he never lost his spirit, his good humor, and his compassion for others. Wish that we all could struggle with such grace.

And then there was his intellectual curiosity and thoroughness. I have worked in the transportation arena for almost 20 years and

had the fortune of dealing with Dave as a transportation reporter throughout that time. I always admired Dave's commitment to a full understanding of all sides of the issues and dedication to accuracy and enlightenment. He cared about the subject matter, and he wanted his reporting to be constructive and to make a positive difference. I always had great confidence in Dave's work.

And then there was his personal and professional integrity. In a town where integrity sometimes seems to be an afterthought, if a thought at all, Dave always thought about that first. Speaking as someone who has spent a great deal of time watching her back, and the backs of others, I can say that I never had that problem with Dave. In fact, Dave was one of those rare people who tried to protect other people's backs. There was never a worry that he would use information to harm others for his own interest. There was never a worry that he would compromise your wishes to suit his own. Dave taught us

that so much more can be accomplished with mutual trust.

And then finally there was his unforgettable uniqueness. There was the way he opened up a telephone conversation—I will not try to do that injustice by attempting to imitate it. Or there was the funny tidbit that he always passed on. Or there was the insightful analysis of what was really going on. Or there was the kind word when you needed it.

Let me now share a reading that I think puts Dave's uniqueness in the proper perspective.

"Give Your Unique Gift. Each of us, as we journey through life, has the opportunity to find and to give his or her unique gift. Whether this gift is quiet or small in the eyes of the world does not matter at all—not at all; it is through the finding and the giving that we may come to know the joy that

lies at the center of both the dark times and the light." (Helen M. Luke in *Kaleidoscope*)¹

Dave certainly found and gave his unique gift of himself to all of us.

A while back, Dave called me to talk about various matters, and in the course of that conversation he thanked me for my friendship. He commented that I had always been a friend, even when he felt he was not deserving or when others seemed to have forsaken him, and he thanked me for that.

I have thought about that call a lot recently, and I want to say to you, Dave, that you had it all wrong.

We are the ones who should say thank you to you—for your decency, for your inner strength, for your intellectual curiosity, for your integrity, and above all for being you.

You have shown us the way. You have shown us the right way. We are all eternally grateful.

¹"100 Ways to Keep Your Soul Alive," *Living Deeply and Fully Every Day*, edited by Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat, 1994.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, February 26, 1998, may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

FEBRUARY 27

9:30 a.m.

Rules and Administration

To hold hearings on S. 1578, to make available on the Internet, for purposes of access and retrieval by the public, certain information available through the Congressional Research Service web site, and to hold oversight hearings on the budget requests for the operations of the Government Printing Office, the National Gallery of Art, and the Congressional Research Service.

SR-301

MARCH 3

9:30 a.m.

Appropriations

Military Construction Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for Army and Defense programs.

SD-124

Appropriations

Energy and Water Development Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Energy, focusing on defense programs.

SD-116

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To resume hearings to examine the scope and depth of the proposed settlement between State Attorneys General and tobacco companies to mandate a total reformation and restructuring of how tobacco products are manufactured, marketed, and distributed in America.

SR-253

Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings on the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 1999 for the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture.

SD-366

Labor and Human Resources

Public Health and Safety Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the United States' response to infectious diseases.

SD-430

Veterans' Affairs

To hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to re-

view the legislative recommendations of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

345 Cannon Building

10:00 a.m.

Appropriations

Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Rural Utilities Service, Rural Housing Service, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, and the Alternative Agricultural Research and Commercialization Center, all of the Department of Agriculture.

SD-138

Appropriations

Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Federal Bureau of Investigations, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service, all of the Department of Justice.

S-146, Capitol

Armed Services

To hold hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Defense and the future years defense program, focusing on the military strategies and operational requirements of the unified commands.

SD-106

Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine market power and structural change in the software industry.

SH-216

10:30 a.m.

Appropriations

Foreign Operations Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed legislation making supplemental appropriations for the International Monetary Fund for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998.

SD-192

12:15 p.m.

Foreign Relations

Business meeting, to consider the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, and to mark up S. Res. 174, to state the sense of the Senate that Thailand is a key partner and friend of the United States, has committed itself to executing its responsibilities under its arrangements with the International Monetary Fund, and that the United States should be prepared to ensure continue close bilateral relations, and H.R. 1116, to provide for the conveyance of the reversionary interest of the U.S. in certain lands to the Clint Independent School District and the Fabens Independent School District.

SD-419

2:30 p.m.

Armed Services

SeaPower Subcommittee

To hold open and closed hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Defense and the future years defense program, focusing on the seapower threat-based requirement.

SR-222

MARCH 4

9:30 a.m.

Labor and Human Resources

Business meeting, to mark up S. 1648, to provide for reductions in youth smoking, for advancements in tobacco-relat-

ed research, and the development of safer tobacco products, and to consider pending nominations.

SD-430

Indian Affairs

Business meeting, to mark up those provisions which fall within the committee's jurisdiction as contained in the President's proposed budget for fiscal year 1999 with a view towards making its recommendations to the Committee on the Budget; to be followed by a hearing on S. 1280, to provide technical corrections to the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996.

SR-485

10:00 a.m.

Appropriations

Defense Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Defense, focusing on Air Force programs.

SD-192

Appropriations

Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Commerce.

S-146, Capitol

Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings on the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Energy.

SD-366

Judiciary

To hold hearings to review the national drug control strategy.

SD-226

2:00 p.m.

Armed Services

Personnel Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Defense and the future years defense program, focusing on recruiting and retention policies.

SR-222

Armed Services

Acquisition and Technology Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Defense and the future years defense program, focusing on policies of the industrial and technology base supporting national defense.

SR-232A

Judiciary

Antitrust, Business Rights, and Competition Subcommittee

To hold hearings on the implementation of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, focusing on section 271.

SD-226

MARCH 5

9:00 a.m.

Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine the global warming agreement recently reached in Kyoto, Japan and its effect on the agricultural economy.

SR-332

9:30 a.m.

Appropriations

VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Corporation for National and Community Service, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

SD-138

- Appropriations
Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Education.
SD-562
- Appropriations
Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Internal Revenue Service, Treasury Department.
SD-192
- Commerce, Science, and Transportation
To resume hearings to examine the scope and depth of the proposed settlement between State Attorneys General and tobacco companies to mandate a total reformation and restructuring of how tobacco products are manufactured, marketed, and distributed in America.
SR-253
- Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings on the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of the Interior.
SD-366
- 10:00 a.m.
Appropriations
Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, and the Small Business Administration.
S-146, Capitol
- Appropriations
Transportation Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine barriers to airline competition.
SD-124
- Labor and Human Resources
Children and Families Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine after school child care options.
SD-430
- 2:00 p.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Science, Technology, and Space Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine the commercialization of space.
SR-253
- Judiciary
Immigration Subcommittee
Business meeting, to consider pending calendar business.
SD-226
- MARCH 9
- 1:00 p.m.
Governmental Affairs
Oversight of Government Management, Restructuring and the District of Columbia Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine the current operation of the District of Columbia public school system.
SD-342
- Special on Aging
To hold hearings to examine how retirement of the baby boomer generation will impact the demand for long-term care, the ability of public budgets to provide those services, and the projected retirement income of baby boomers.
SD-562
- 2:00 p.m.
Judiciary
Youth Violence Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine the proposed effectiveness of the provisions of
- S. 10, to reduce violent juvenile crime, promote accountability by juvenile criminals, and punish and deter violent gang crime (pending on Senate calendar).
SD-226
- MARCH 10
- 9:00 a.m.
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
To hold hearings to examine the current Federal crop insurance program and proposals to improve the system.
SR-332
- 9:30 a.m.
Appropriations
Military Construction Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for military construction programs, focusing on Air Force and Navy projects.
SD-124
- 10:00 a.m.
Appropriations
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture.
SD-138
- Appropriations
Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine proposals to prevent child exploitation.
SD-192
- Armed Services
SeaPower Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Defense and the future years defense program, focusing on littoral warfare missions in the 21st century.
SR-222
- 2:00 p.m.
Appropriations
Energy and Water Development Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Energy, focusing on research and efficiency programs.
SD-116
- MARCH 11
- 9:30 a.m.
Indian Affairs
To hold oversight hearings on sovereign immunity, focusing on contracts involving Indian tribes and alleged difficulties in collecting state retail taxes.
SH-216
- 10:00 a.m.
Appropriations
Defense Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Defense, focusing on Navy and Marine Corps programs.
SD-192
- MARCH 12
- 9:00 a.m.
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
To hold hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for child nutrition programs.
SR-332
- 9:30 a.m.
Appropriations
VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the De-
- partment of Housing and Urban Development, and the Community Development Financial Institute.
SD-138
- Appropriations
Legislative Branch Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Joint Committee on Printing, the Joint Economic Committee, the Joint Committee on Taxation, the Sergeant at Arms, the Library of Congress and the Congressional Research Service, and the Office of Compliance.
S-128, Capitol
- Appropriations
Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Treasury Department.
SD-192
- Armed Services
Acquisition and Technology Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Defense and the future years defense program, focusing on science and technology programs.
SR-222
- Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Business meeting, to mark up proposed legislation relating to the proposed settlement between State Attorneys General and tobacco companies to mandate a total reformation and restructuring of how tobacco products are manufactured, marketed, and distributed in America, and to consider other pending calendar business.
SR-253
- 10:00 a.m.
Appropriations
Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Supreme Court, and the Judiciary.
S-146, Capitol
- MARCH 17
- 9:00 a.m.
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
To resume hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for child nutrition programs, focusing on the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program.
SR-332
- 9:30 a.m.
Appropriations
Energy and Water Development Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Energy's environmental management program.
SD-116
- 10:00 a.m.
Appropriations
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Food Safety and Inspection Service, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Agriculture Marketing Service, and the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, all of the Department of Agriculture.
SD-138
- Appropriations
Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the United Nations.
S-146, Capitol

<p>Labor and Human Resources To hold hearings to examine retirement security issues. SD-430</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Appropriations Foreign Operations Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for foreign assistance programs, focusing on international narcotics. SD-124</p>	<p>MARCH 24</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Appropriations Energy and Water Development Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Corp of Engineers, and the Bureau of Reclamation, Department of the Interior. SD-116</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Appropriations Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Farm Service Agency, Foreign Agricultural Service, and the Risk Management Agency, all of the Department of Agriculture. SD-138</p> <p>Appropriations Transportation Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for AM-TRAK, focusing on the future of AM-TRAK. SD-192</p> <p>Labor and Human Resources To hold hearings to examine health care quality issues. SD-430</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Appropriations Foreign Operations Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for foreign assistance programs, focusing on infectious diseases. SD-124</p>	<p>MARCH 31</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Appropriations Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission and the Food and Drug Administration. SD-138</p> <p>Appropriations Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Justice's counterterrorism programs. SD-192</p> <p>Labor and Human Resources To hold hearings to examine issues relating to charter schools. SD-430</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Appropriations Foreign Operations Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for foreign assistance programs, focusing on the Caspian energy program. SD-124</p>
<p>MARCH 18</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Appropriations Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Labor. SD-138</p> <p>Labor and Human Resources Business meeting, to consider pending calendar business. SD-430</p> <p>Veterans' Affairs To hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to review the legislative recommendations of the Disabled American Veterans. 345 Cannon Building</p> <p>Indian Affairs To hold oversight hearings on the implementation of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act (P.L. 101-644). SR-485</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Appropriations Defense Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Defense, focusing on National Guard programs. SD-192</p>	<p>MARCH 25</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Veterans' Affairs To hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to review the legislative recommendations of AMVETS, the American Ex-Prisoners of War, the Vietnam Veterans of America, and the Retired Officers Association. 345 Cannon Building</p> <p>Indian Affairs To hold hearings to examine Indian gaming issues. SH-216</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Appropriations Defense Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Defense, focusing on Army programs. SD-192</p>	<p>APRIL 1</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Indian Affairs To hold oversight hearings on barriers to credit and lending in Indian country. SR-485</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Appropriations Defense Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for Department of Defense medical programs. SD-192</p> <p>2:00 p.m. Judiciary Antitrust, Business Rights, and Competition Subcommittee To hold hearings to examine competition and concentration in the cable/video markets. SD-226</p>
<p>MARCH 19</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Appropriations VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, and cemeterial expenses for the Army. SD-138</p> <p>Appropriations Legislative Branch Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Architect of the Capitol, the General Accounting Office, and the Government Printing Office. S-128, Capitol</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Appropriations Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for the Federal Communications Commission, and the Securities and Exchange Commission. S-146, Capitol</p> <p>Appropriations Transportation Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Transportation. SD-124</p> <p>2:00 p.m. Judiciary Antitrust, Business Rights, and Competition Subcommittee To hold hearings to examine international aviation agreements and anti-trust immunity implications. SD-226</p>	<p>MARCH 26</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Appropriations Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Health and Human Services. SD-138</p> <p>Appropriations Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Office of National Drug Control Policy. SD-192</p> <p>Labor and Human Resources Children and Families Subcommittee To hold hearings on the Head Start education program. SD-430</p>	<p>APRIL 2</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Appropriations Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services. SD-138</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Appropriations Transportation Subcommittee To hold hearings to examine airline ticketing practices. SD-124</p>
		<p>APRIL 21</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Appropriations Foreign Operations Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for foreign assistance, focusing on crime programs. Room to be announced</p>

<p>APRIL 22</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Indian Affairs To hold oversight hearings on Title V amendments to the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975. SR-485</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Appropriations Defense Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Defense, focusing on the Ballistic Missile Defense program. SD-192</p>	<p>APRIL 29</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Indian Affairs To resume hearings to examine Indian gaming issues. Room to be announced</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Appropriations Defense Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Defense, focusing on Bosnian assistance. SD-192</p>	<p>partment of Defense, focusing on the U.S. Pacific Command. SD-192</p> <p>MAY 7</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Appropriations Energy and Water Development Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the National Science Foundation, and the Office of Science and Technology. SD-138</p>
<p>APRIL 23</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Appropriations Energy and Water Development Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. SD-138</p>	<p>APRIL 30</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Appropriations VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Council on Environmental Quality. SD-138</p>	<p>MAY 11</p> <p>2:00 p.m. Appropriations Defense Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Defense. SD-192</p>
<p>APRIL 28</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Appropriations Foreign Operations Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for foreign assistance programs, focusing on Bosnia. Room to be announced</p>	<p>MAY 5</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Appropriations Foreign Operations Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for foreign assistance programs. Room to be announced</p> <p>MAY 6</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Appropriations Defense Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the De-</p>	<p>MAY 13</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Appropriations Defense Subcommittee To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1999 for the Department of Defense. SD-192</p> <p>OCTOBER 6</p> <p>9:30 a.m. Veterans' Affairs To hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on the legislative recommendations of the American Legion. 345 Cannon Buildin</p>